

Winter 2012

## Early Childhood Music Conference

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### Recommended Citation

(2012). Early Childhood Music Conference. *TEMPO*, 10 (1). Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/tempo/vol10/iss1/8>

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# LOCAL EDUCATORS TRAINED TO TEACH MUSIC TO PRESCHOOLERS

The Early Childhood Music Initiative (ECMI), a project funded by the PNC Foundation's *Grow Up Great* program and designed by Dr. Rachel Whitcomb, Assistant Professor of Music Education, held its first annual Professional Development Conference June 10-11, 2011 at the Mary Pappert School of Music.

Clinicians specializing in early childhood music from across the country presented practical workshops to 125 preschool teachers and directors, early childhood caregivers and music educators from the greater Pittsburgh area. Conference attendees were invited, free of charge, to attend educational sessions focusing on teaching techniques for incorporating music into preschool instruction.

Eleven Duquesne undergraduate music education students introduced clinicians, demonstrated musical activities for use in preschool instruction, performed musical selections and assisted with registration. All conference participants received teaching materials for immediate use in their classrooms, along with the ECMI Lesson



Collection and CD, which included developmentally appropriate lesson plans, songs and rhymes for use with preschool children.

"Preschool teachers often lack the training they would like to have to teach music," said Whitcomb. "This project is designed to provide them with the preparation and resources they need to

integrate music into their classrooms in Pittsburgh."

Whitcomb has developed lesson plans and practical teaching ideas, and selected six area preschools in need of music programs. She continues to train and prepare undergraduate music education majors to teach the lessons in the designated schools.

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